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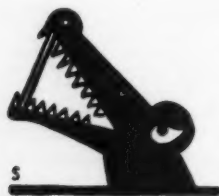
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Puppets and Politics in Mexico's Past

Daniel S. Keller
University of California at Davis

The volatile nature of Latin-American politics has often been reflected on the puppet stage, a place where caricature and satire have proved to be especially effective, while danger of reprisal faded behind protective veils of fantasy and allegory. During the turbulent period just after Mexico broke its colonial bonds with Spain string-puppet extravaganzas with obvious political overtones entertained large audiences for several hours at a time and provided a necessary safety valve for disaffected liberals.

Guided by the sound of a drum residents of the capital, at times over three hundred to a performance, would flock at sundown on Sundays and Thursdays to a theater set up in the spacious patio of a building known then as "The House of Lettuce." For about five centavos one could take his place in the audience, seated in the patio, which was lighted by pine torches and equipped with comfortable, well-arranged seats. Raucous music from an orchestra composed of violin, guitar, bugle, a flute-like instrument, and two much used kettle drums would regale him before the curtain rose to reveal what had been announced on posters as "magical puppets."

The term came not from the way these string-puppets were manipulated but from an optical illusion created when the show began. At curtain time a well built stage of sizable proportions came into view together with an attentive puppet audience seated on diminutive benches and in orchestra seats and boxes arranged alongside the stage before the human spectators. In the glow of a triangular shaped lantern equipped with white, red, and green glass lenses these marionettes, which were just under a foot and a

half in height, appeared to be life-sized men and women, whose presence lent an air of realness to the stage action. Voices came from behind the scenes rather than from the once traditional reciter in front of the stage.

The proprietor of the theatre, Ambrosio Prunela, claimed to be a native of a northern Mexican province which was later to become part of the United States. Prunela spoke an uncouth jargon, but compensated for his linguistic shortcomings by considerable dexterity as a puppeteer. He confessed that he had some of his puppets modeled for him, probably of clay or gesso, by some talented craftsman. Ghostwriters offered their services then as now, and when Prunela needed a song or poem for a variety program, he would pay a public scribe to compose one for the occasion. The scripts for shows of a political nature were written for him by two university students. Three assistant operators helped him manipulate the controls.

The first part of one performance represented allegorically the downfall of the self-styled Mexican emperor, Agustin Iturbide, who had been corrupted by excessive power and was eventually condemned to perpetual exile in the spring of 1823. The finale of the evening was a dance called "Cutting Capers," in which the marionettes of the make-believe audience joined the others on the stage to the accompaniment of violin and guitar. One of the figures, a high official (doubtless intended to stand for Iturbide) lamented his betrayal by Fortune, which had placed him in a lofty post only to tumble him to his ruin. The spectators were left to reflect not only on the justice of the dethroned king's exile, but also on the ingratitude

of those whom he had sought to win by favors. In this case justice was tempered by compassion, and the audience pondered the moral that man had better content himself with a modest lot than court the disaster which an exalted and extravagant life would be sure to bring.

Circus acrobats of international renown had extended their tours to Mexico by the nineteenth century. It is therefore no surprise that puppets, with their aptitude for tightrope and trapeze, were called on to perform in theaters like Prunela's. The "capers" number was, then, quite naturally followed by an interlude of marionette tightrope walkers who climbed up to circle around a gilded clay statue of Dame Fortune, which was balanced on a rope in the center of the scene. Moving their arms up and down rhythmically to keep their balance the dancers would bow down before the statue each time they passed it. Suddenly a clown emerged to shout warning to the daredevils that the tightrope had come loose from its moorings and was about to collapse. The gilded statue promptly toppled down and was smashed to bits, leaving the obsequious acrobats to hop here and there about the other ropes in confusion until they at last managed to clamber down to the ground. The center tightrope was restrung and the broken statue replaced by the figure of a rising sun, to which the dancers once more paid their respects as the curtain fell. Again the audience was supposed to meditate on the parallel between the disastrous tightrope dance and the plight of their recently exiled ruler.

Iturbide and his would-be royal entourage served again as the target in an allegory entitled "The False Lottery Ticket." In a magnificent ballroom scene a party of elegantly dressed puppets could be seen parading about in pomp and circumstance. Their gaiety was unexpectedly cut short by

a magistrate who charged that their finery had been bought by the host of the ball with the proceeds from a counterfeit lottery ticket. The guests, stripped of their jewelry and regalia, departed whimpering that they had never really wanted the gifts, but had been persuaded against their will to wear them.

Prunela, like other nineteenth-century puppet impresarios in Mexico, was fond of elaborate street spectacles with a series of rapid changes of scenery that focussed the audience's attention finally on some significant detail of the total setting. One might first expect to be treated to a kind of animated diorama of life in the capital. Against a background of taverns and markets, or perhaps the Alameda park with thieves lurking behind one of the once numerous little chapels there, string-puppets would clump arm-in-arm across stage calling out saucy compliments to one another. Their large, brightly colored shoes contrasted with their black clothes, while their heads, strongly resembling feather dusters, may have been meant as a silent commentary on the excessively dusty condition of the Alameda, whose promenade frequently needed sprinkling during the dry season. Out of the throng would come the operator of a cosmoramic pep-show or "tutilimundi," announcing his program to the tune of a crank organ. Several puppets took turns peering into the apparatus, which invariably provided them with material for a noisy political commentary.

A rapid change of perspective would next bring into view the exterior of a casino or of an iced-drink parlor, followed promptly by an inside scene where a vendor was approaching a group of affluent-looking Mexican bureaucrats and urging them to buy certain ointments guaranteed to make them more accomplished flatterers. In another part of the establishment someone was certain to rise from his table to harangue his companions about the

latest government scandal. A further change of scene might show, in front of a decrepit tenement house, a funeral procession for some pitiful minor official whose salary had been months in arrears and whose death resulted from lack of proper medical care.

Such information as I have here disclosed concerning these early nineteenth-century Mexican puppets has come from a rare old volume entitled "Six Nights of Magical Puppets in Vinegar Alley" (*Seis noches de titeres magicos en el Callejon del Vinagre*), published in Mexico City in 1823 and now part of the Stutro Collection of the California State Library in San Francisco. "Callejon del Vinagre," as

Paul McPharlin suggested in his history of puppetry in America, may have been a pun on the "Calle de Venero," a street famous for its puppet shows during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Old maps of Mexico City show that this street was several blocks south of the main plaza or Zocalo. Many of these curious old places have, of course, disappeared as Mexico's capital mushroomed into the twentieth century. Eventually, perhaps, public records and an occasional ancient book will help chronicles to reconstruct for the history of Mexican dramatic art an era of strong reliance on native political themes and of unexpected technical elaboration.

The Old World Touch

Herb Scheffel

Maintaining the charm of old world story telling through puppetry, Otto and Caroline Kunze still carry on in their studio at 25 East 20th Street, in New York City. It is an ideal studio of several rooms (departments, I guess you'd call them), with equipment and materials and puppets neatly filed and displayed with plenty of room for rehearsals and practice at a large marionette stage set up on one side of the largest room. The spirit of puppetry and make believe permeates the entire studio.

Otto and Caroline are everything one would expect to find in European puppeteers—kindly, warm, informal, imaginative and always perfectionists in their work. In this age of speed and commercialism in show business, where so much talent is half-baked, and the boosting of it has become a major business—it is heartwarming to see the Kunzes retaining their own personalities and dignity in the craft. At least, as much as is possible these days.

They are still the idealists and holding on to their ideals when dealing with sponsors, ten percenters, producers, directors and the networks, is quite a feat.

They can tell you some amusing tales about directors and sponsors of commercial shows, and what sponsors think a puppet show, variety act, short commercial, window show, commercial film should be like.

With repetition, duplication and set pattern to be followed in commercial work, the shows eventually smack of just that... unoriginality—tired, dreary carbon copies. The cry goes up continuously for new talent, new ideas—commercial mediums eat up material fast—and the whole thing repeats itself in a never ending circle.

"Elaborateness", says Otto, "seems to be the idea of the un-hep sponsor. The director as well as the sponsor seems to have the legitimate theatre confused with puppetry. Consequently, the spectacular, loaded with scene

changes and MANY puppets and props, is now expected by audiences who have been trained to think this is good puppetry. As a result, the true, simple approach to puppetry is being lost today.

"Display people too, have invaded the field—building sets and props meant for window displays—confusing the puppet operators and the puppets. Too many people in commercial puppetry today do not know the basic simplicity of the puppet medium."

Continuing about puppet know-how, Otto mentioned a few illusion killers which, through the medium of the television close-up, have become an evil.

"The power of the hand puppet is in the extemporaneous spoken dialogue. For puppetry's sake, and its very nature, one must be against this illusion killing animation and concentration on mouths, lips, eyes, brows, beards and mustaches. The movements of a whole head, arm, leg, body—PLUS excellent, convincing voice coloring and dialogue, can be powerful enough to carry the characters across the stage. This eliminates the close-up of the sly wink, or flick of a little finger—which, of late, has been played up to the hilt in its importance, as being the "clever" part of the medium.

"Much has to be left to the audience", Otto continued with his usual zeal. "People MUST bring something to the play too—their imagination and will to be entertained and carried away in a miniature world of fantasy—NOT the realism of the legitimate stage.

"We must go back to the home and the intimate shows, live performances, to get back to real simplicity—away from the over clever spectacular type of entertainment today, to really enjoy puppets. Only this way, and this way alone, will we see any NEW originality in the field.

"Burr Tillstrom, working with a marionette group at one time, saw the

power of extemporaneous performing with hand puppets. He followed it—he kept his situations simple, his puppets are still powerful because there isn't an ounce of overdecoration in the features that ISN'T NECESSARY. And Burr is still going strong because he knows this secret."

Always a stickler for the pure, wholesome and simple myself, I prodded Otto again, to keep dropping more pearls of wisdom and experience. "If you have more than four hand puppets on stage at one time, you're lost—two, three or four, depending on the number of manipulators backstage, can cast a spell without the aid of sets, moveable puppet features, and props. All this embroidery is unnecessarily gilding an already perfect lily. The characterization of the puppet comes from inside the puppeteer—and not the puppet figure. Go back to simplicity, for heaven's sake—it's for your own benefit, if you want a good show. Throw out the trappings—concentrate on body movements and voices for the puppets—they are the backbone of puppetry. And all this is basically the projection of the puppet-manipulator's OWN personality, background, and character.

"I think the same holds true with present day ventriloquists, who have become too unnatural with the delivery of the voices of dummies. For commercial reasons, the dummies are now allowed to immitate and take on the qualities of human actors. The make-believe, the idea of a hunk of beech, oak or ash expressing itself as a thing created FROM a hunk of wood, is lost in making little Billie, snappy Ronnie or spinster Aggie imitate a live actor who is up there punching away with adlibs, joking as a live M.C. would throw his cracks over his shoulder.

"As for audience reaction and interest in a rebirth of puppet entertainment—and harking back once more to simplicity—puppeteers would do well to become interested again, in per-

forming before children. Here is a big, neglected audience—future audiences—wasted by the puppeteer of today.

So much time is taken to cater to the adult audience. Kids REALLY influence adults in the audience AND the performers. Kids get their impressions directly and react accordingly. No need for moveable features, elaborate castles and forests. Some foliage from the stage top represents a forest to children—the clink of a few coins magnify to thousands in a child's imagination, a gold crown always means the puppet is a king, and rags represent the woodchopper—all this plus the projection of the puppeteers showmanship. Don't underestimate a child's mind. Don't over elaborate these simple symbols when designing your shows and writing the script. Make your dialogue and situations WORK for you. Puppeteers should play for ALL age groups, to learn ALL reactions, to meet ALL situations. Not only will this make them better puppeteers, backed by confidence and versatility—but they are building future, better indoctrinated adult audiences for the puppet theatre. There should be NO special age group that a puppeteer prefers to work before. If you're NOT liked by adults, or kids,—there is something wrong with your show. Have respect for every age group, we're all human.

"Well, progress is slow, but sincere efforts will pay dividends in the course of time. Remember to keep the performance warm, simple and direct—and your love and affection for puppets will go from you, through the strings, to the puppets—like a current of electricity. What you project is seen and heard, in the little blockheads.

"In the case of the marionette—don't try to ape the legitimate theatre designers like Robert Edmond Jones or Raoul Pene DeBois, recreating a pageant of sets and actors a la Radio City Music Hall—it gets in the way of your script too. Poil down the flats, the

drops and unnecessary decorative units—leave enough clearance of space for the strings to move easily and freely in your working area—leave enough space for your audience's imagination too. Pageantry is NOT puppetry—it is imitating round actors in a live theatre, on a small scale. Over elaborateness gets in the way of spontaneous delivery, lines, puns, whimsical last minute twists of action, joking, satire, comedy and the power of all important dialogue. Otherwise the very nature of puppetry is virtually knocked out."

"Praise be", I thought, over our after dinner drinks, "for two wonderful idealists—I know things will soon be well again in puppetdom, if I could remember all these gems of experience, wisdom and study—and jot them all down as soon as possible, in order to pass them on to YOU."

Biographical data on Otto and Caroline Kunze:

They have worked with marionettes, but their most excellent forte is the hand puppet play. Their repertory in the latter includes the imaginative "Seven at One Blow," "The Blacksmith Shop," "The Globe Trotter," "The Magic Hat," "Don Fernando—Prince of Spain." Marionette productions list "The Frog Prince," Otto's German interpretation (rewritten in English with Bill Lecornec), "The Princess and the Pea," "Young Mozart in Vienna" and excerpts from "Der Rosenkavalier."

In October, 1951, with Bil Baird, Otto produced the wonderful COMPLETE MANUAL FOR MAKING MARIONETTES, published by WOMAN'S DAY MAGAZINE—which, to date, has sold tons of copies. Currently he is working on a book sorely needed by hand puppet showmen—a complete book devoted entirely to 12 hand puppet play scripts. So far the volume is untitled, and he intends to illustrate it with his own drawings.

The Kunzes have prepared a stack

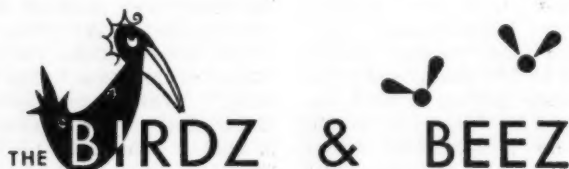
of commercial shows—live and filmed—for banking institutions, department stores, animated display windows for James McCreary and Co., Inc., films and displays for Purchasing's Midcentury Conference, Red Goose Shoe Co., Kraft Television Theatre, New York Times Book Week, Association of Savings Banks of New York, Voice of Firestone, South Carolina Commission of Forestry, Atlantic Refining Co., American Banker's Association, CBS-TV play *THE WEB*—giving these the magic touch, when and wherever possible, in order that the shows wouldn't smack too much of the "smoke of industry".

Currently, on Channel 9, at 7 P. M., in the East, is *TERRYTOONS*—a juvenile program of animated cartoons and chatter, produced and presented by Claude Kirshner (formerly ringmaster of the *SUPER CIRCUS* show). As M.C. of the show, Kirshner has a magnificent hand puppet he manipulates between cartoon films. This mag-

nificent puppet character is the work of Caroline, who designed and executed it. At present, the hand puppet is simply called *CLOWNIE*, but there is to be a contest, shortly, to find a proper name for him.

The Kunzes have one of the most complete libraries on American and Foreign puppet books—and from Otto's shelves, came the following quotation—the introduction by Edwin Arnet, to Pierre Gauchat's *MARRIONETTES*, published 1944, in Erlenbach, Zurich:

"There is no theatre in which one so forgets one's existence as in the marionette theatre. Before the real stage we compare ourselves with the actors and with the figures they represent, because the actors and the audience are all of the same flesh and the same nature. But in the marionette theatre everything is dehumanized. Nature has been turned to spirit by the reduction of dimension; has been translated into her own stenograph."



George Latshaw

"But where DO you get your ideas," the lady insisted. "Why, madame," I replied, "IDEAS GROW ON TREES. Basil Milovsoroff uses the roots and branches: Marjorie Batchelder gathers up the pine cones; and I get mine from an old trunk." The lady thought a moment, and then dashed off to buy a hatchet. That's how stump puppets were born!

Sooner or later everyone asks where the ideas come from, and the answers are apt to be as full of double-talk, mystery and embarrassment as the

"birds-and bees" routine on other matters. There are a few facts of life about puppetry it would be well to look into. The idea that skilled craftsmanship in construction is the key to success is for the birds, and it doesn't matter a hoot if you have ball-and-socket joints on the bee's knees. There is more to puppetry than meets the eye. (And that makes it harder to see the point, at first.)

The overemphasis on technical matters leads to perfecting the puppet, and does nothing to perfect the puppeteers.

In the cult of the craftsman, the work is beautiful, but numb. Or, as a rather famous lady of the theatre put it, "... just so much animated kindling."

Let's look at some distinctive "ideas" on "jugglers." Romain Proctor has created a monkey with such infectious charm, it's love at first sight. He juggles two balls with uninhibited energy, stopping only to share his glee with the enraptured audience. In the hands of Cedric Head, the juggler is Bruin, the bear, who has to be coaxed to perform at all with the bar he carries. In the middle of the act, Bruin tires and sits down. When Bruin's mind wanders to the audience, Mr. Head uses a gentle persuasion until the act is successfully completed to the delight of everyone. John Shirley presents a clown who works with a ball and stick, balancing them with such sensitivity and precision, there is almost a hush of suspense during the routine. The physical quality of the accomplished acrobat, the skill, the daring, the assurance, are all there.

You, see, there is variety in variety, when you have an idea. Working from essentially the same "gimmick" or method of stringing to juggle, these men developed their own individual creations. They did it by:

1. Varying the external appearance (large and small animal forms, the human form)

2. Varying the action. (Prock, Head, and Shirley have a keen sense of timing for their individual acts, and none of them are exactly alike.) They have stressed this difference in action by giving their characters different objects to work with (two balls, one bar, a stick and a ball)

3. Varying the CHARACTERIZATION—and this is probably the most important factor in creating the idea.

They have gone far beyond the "gimmick" or the "trick" of juggling; they have breathed the illusion of life into their puppets, so they seem to have separate and distinct personali-

ties of their own. Each is highly successful with the audience, and each draws a different response. Through their puppets, Prock bubbles with joy; Mr. Head evokes good-natured sympathy and tenderness; John Shirley inspires awe and admiration.

When you're hunting for an idea, start with CHARACTERIZATION—it will make that puppet come alive with compelling force as only you can do it, and it will provide the clues for what to do about the appearance and action. But perversely, all the slick appearances and frantic action won't create a character for you. To make a fetish of the finish and salaam the smooth surface will help you as a puppeteer about as much as polishing marble will make you a sculptor. I've seen a lot of time and effort wasted on what were daringly billed as Oriental dancers. After their first appearance, it was obvious they weren't Oriental, and they couldn't dance, but they did take three minutes.

Audiences and puppeteers alike will rejoice over the appearance of refreshing new puppet personalities. Even the old themes can be given a twist with the proper characterization. Bil Baird did it with his slit-eyed, cigarette-smoking character at the honky-tonk piano, whose savoir-faire at the keyboard is skillfully controlled by rods. And Martin Stevens most certainly did it with the surprise of a firecracker in his hilariously slapstick routine of Mr. Biggers at the Grand Piano. Steve, with rare humor, gave a very positive characterization to the piano. The result is skillfully built horseplay that leaves the audience fractured with laughter.

Walter Wilkinson's appearance in this country a number of years ago was a revelation to those who saw him perform. With the simplest puppets (crude by our glossy standards) he created a world of illusion surpassing what many people had thought possible. Burr Tillstrom's perennially

fresh and imaginative humor on "Kukla, Fran and Ollie" is not the result of his ability to construct puppets. Burr admits many puppeteers are more capable craftsmen, but how many can equal his complete and captivating

characterizations in the puppet theatre. Before we get carried away with the carts, let's take a look at the horse.

There's one skeleton act I haven't seen yet. The skeleton belonged to a late, lackadaisical cow!

Opposition in the Script

Martin Stevens

"You don't practice what you preach," someone said to me. "You say a play has to go from A to C opposed by B, and then you do 'The Owl and the Pussycat.'" The audience loves it, but where's the conflict?"

Well, that's right—there is no conflict in this innocent little nursery rhyme. But audiences have more fun with conflict or opposition, so we make it. Can't do it with the rhyme: that's set. So we make it with the characters. We take three stage struck guys who want to do a play, give them separate personalities, and the conflict starts. Who will choose the play—who will be the boss—who will take the most bows—who will take what roles—who will recite the rhyme—and presto! because of their different attitudes, there is opposition.

Once they're actually in the play, let's keep tripping them up with their own short sightedness, or clumsiness, or egotism: the "Beautiful Pea-green Boat" nearly capsizes—they forgot to cast someone as the "Piggy-wig"—they quarrel over the brevity of the "Turkey's" role—and the definition of a "runcible spoon."

By the time they get to the last four lines of the rhyme they're into the

swing of it, and it ends happily and smoothly, as it should. So what we have done is not merely recited a pleasant little rhyme, but made up a play about people who wanted to do a play, the accomplishment of which was opposed by their differences of opinion.

Take an even simpler thing: a puppet plays the piano. Not much chance here to use the "A to C opposed by B" formula. But let's try. Start with the proposition: "Never Kick Your Piano; Remember, It Has More Legs Than You Have." Our piano feels that it is an important part of the act, and should take as many bows as the pianist. But the pianist isn't going to share the applause with anyone, and slaps the piano around to keep it in its place. He is mean to the piano, whose feelings are hurt. Well, a piano is bigger than a pianist, and has more moving parts, so—the Wurlitzer turns, annihilates his tormentor, and alone on the stage at last, takes all the bows.

Try it out on your stuff. Find out who you're for, what he wants, who opposes his getting it, and how he overcomes the opposition and gets it. It's simple, and it works!

1957 Festival at U. C. L. A.
August 5 through 10

Resources of Sound

By Lewis Parsons

An investigation into the resources of sound will reveal the fact that there are many possibilities for sound beyond the mere provision for background music to a play, or the use of a musical selection for a turn in a variety show. The expert use of music combined with sound effects can determine the mood, heighten the dramatic action, and spark the whole production with magic and humour. Anyone entering the foyer of a movie theatre while an animated cartoon is in progress will be aware of the barrage of sounds employed on the sound track in addition to the musical continuity. These sounds help to give realities of weight, consistency, texture to the bodiless shadows on the screen, and impulsion to their movements. In a puppet show there is a similar concentration of significant action which can be punctuated and accentuated effectively in the same manner. Exaggerated sound elements help the action to carry aurally in much the same way that caricature of features and expression help the puppets to carry visually. When the big, bad wolf blows down the little pig's house, his huff and puff can have the sound of a big wind, and the paper house can fall with the roar of ripping planks and piling timbers.

Sound effects of every description are available on phonograph records through such companies as Valentine Records, Inc., which specializes in sounds for theatrical, radio or television productions. An artistic approach to sound has been inaugurated by Emery Cook in his atmospheric recordings of natural sounds such as the voices of the sea, and the fury of a thunder storm in the mountains issued in true hi-fidelity quality by the Cook Laboratories. However, the re-

sources of sound are by no means confined to the phonograph, for the tape recorder includes all these possibilities and suggests as many more. With a recorder one can invent one's own background of sound.

It is not necessary to be able to play complicated music on the piano or other difficult musical instruments to add original touches of music to your show. Anyone can produce charming musical sounds on simple instruments such as toy xylophones, triangles, gongs, bells, whistles, and these toy instruments partake of the very nature of the miniature stage. Sounds of an interesting variety can be produced by merely tapping with a stick on various objects such as blocks of wood, pieces of metal, pans, cardboard boxes.

In the Chinese shadow show the movements of walking, sitting, bowing are accompanied by conventional, tapped, rhythmic patterns. Those who have seen Pauline Benton's Red Gate Theatre presentations will remember how much this rhythmic accompaniment added to the charm of the action seeming to give a symbolical significance to the fragile movement of the characters. Always remembered, too, will be Spence Gilmore's shimmering Spanish dancer shaking a tambourine while going through the graceful convolutions of the dance, and Elizabeth Merten's comedian giving out the theme on the xylophone for the charming variations to follow. Pat Kelly, one of our junior members, has a hand puppet clown who rings bells of different pitches to a recording of "Bye, Bye, Blues". The changing harmonies supplied by the orchestration give the effect of a much more complicated melody than that actually played.

In the live theatre the sounds of
(Continued on page 23)



PUPPET PARADE

(see photo section)

VERSATILITY

From the time, as a twelve-year-old, that he cut up his mother's twenty-five dollars a yard real lace to costume a puppet, his first, Doug Anderson has had one thought in mind, the production of shows for children. Magic and puppets have vied with each other for attention... and together with cartooning, acting, ventriloquism, and an in-born love for, and ability to manage children, have put him in the foremost ranks as a children's entertainer.

Teamed with his wife Gayle, (daughter of Clyde and Viv Michael), who combines an executive art job with entertaining, they have just completed 20 smash hit weeks on CBS-TV as the Masked Magician and his assistant on the Big Top Show. Children the country over know Doug as the Magical Barn Painter on CBS-TV's Captain Kangaroo Show. Some time ago he appeared on NBC-TV in the Magic Clown series. He is now returning to that show, to the delight of children in the New York area.

"Scoopy," the lovable vent figure shown here, never fails to get into the act.

PUPPET FAIR

Never doubt for a moment the enthusiasm of California puppeteers. As evidence we present these pictures of the first Oakland Puppet Fair.

Lettie Connell who sent us the pictures, writes:

"THE PUPPET FAIR was held at Children's Fairyland, Lakeside Park, Oakland, California on September 22 and 23, 1956. Fairyland is maintained by the Oakland Park Department and

is a charming little park full of units depicting scenes from fairy tales with live animals in the units and roaming the grounds for children to feed and pet. There is a puppet theatre in the shape of a picture book. It was an ideal setting for a puppeteer's get-together.

"The idea for a fair began with the late Frank Hayward, director of Fairyland's Puppet Theatre and Roberta Mack. Most of our local puppeteers had not been able to go East to the P of A Festivals and we began making plans before we heard that this year's Fest would be held on the West Coast. Through the kindness of the Oakland Park Department we were offered a place to hold a local festival of our own.

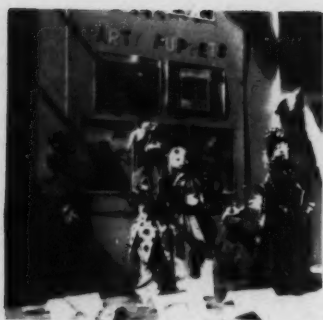
"Dorothy Hayward, succeeding her husband as the Fairyland Puppet Theatre Director and a small group of enthusiastic puppeteers met and made plans. We talked to many local puppeteers and puppet groups and signed them up for shows and exhibits. And on that bright and sunny weekend we the puppeteers all assembled and talked puppets, and watched each other's shows and admired each other's exhibits. Several thousand other people came to Fairyland that weekend and saw more puppets than they would ordinarily see in a lifetime.

"The puppeteers had a wonderful time and we all went away feeling we had made new friends and were excited and stimulated by the shows we had seen. Each show was different and each exhibit reflected the individuality of the artist. We are now planning the 1957 Fair. More shows, more exhibits and more fun!"





Versatility



Oakland





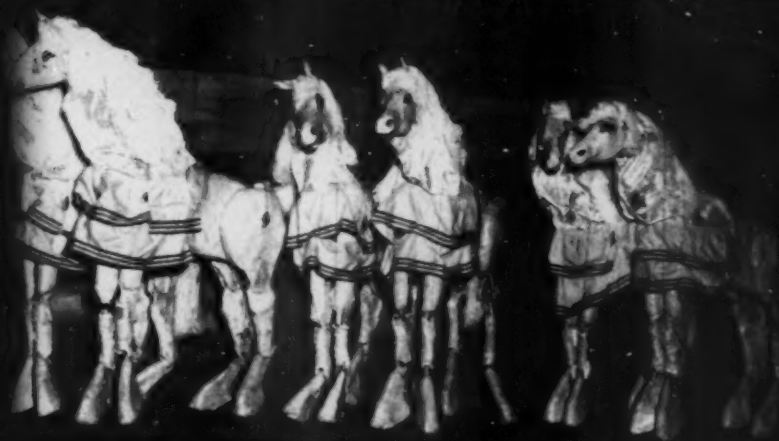
Fair





RAGGEDY





By Lee Head



ANN



by OTTO KUNZE



FIRST GRADE

Nancy Hazell



BY DESIGN CONSERVATION AND DESIGN

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Group Picture

First row: Jenny Oznowicz Frances Oznowicz, Mary McMahon, Pat Lavin, Dorothy Hayward, Jim Embree, Bev Philis, Helena Hayward.

Second Row: Lettie Connell, Marion Derby, Flemming Heegard, Jerry Juhl, Jim Chandler, Elva Aiken, (standing) Jack Aiken.

Third row: Roberta Mack, Betty Mount, Ray Mount, Kay Ballan, Jan Ballan, Lee Donaghey, Bob Darling, Mike Oznowicz.

Fourth Row: Paul Miller, John La-Patra, Lewis Mahlmann, Mark Benjamin, (rear) Hugh Seyfried.

In addition to these we note Ralph Chesse, sixth from left in the picture of exhibitors.

Is it any wonder it was a successful fair with all these names behind it?

PARSON'S PUPPETS

You will enjoy the article by Lewis Parson, "Resources of Sound" in this issue.

And you will envy the "vagabond trailer life" of Lewis after you read what he writes us:

"After seven weeks in Oklahoma City we moved our trailer down here to Corpus Christi, and we have been having a nice relaxed time after the Christmas rush of the last weeks in Oklahoma City. This is the sort of vacation I have wanted for a long time—nothing special to do, just sort of free to follow one's inclinations with no interruptions either by people or telephone, not even by mail, so far! With the trailer I have plenty of resources with books in five languages, records, tapes, correspondence, everything but a piano. But the local Steinway-Hammond agency allows me to record and practice free of charge, and the excellent library lets us take out any books for a \$2.00 overall deposit charge. Corpus Christi seems to encourage the arts. The weather here is continual, warm summer sunshine.

"We will be here in Corpus Christi

for about five weeks then we will move on to San Antonio to complete the time until Easter. I hope to make a few excursions down into the valley close to the border in order to reach as many Mexican children as possible while I am doing "Pedro and his Pets." Actually we haven't done it for Mexican children so far, and here in Corpus Christi will be the first chance. I am not worried about the results as the children here have always welcomed with enthusiasm the merest allusion to Mexican music, Spanish words, Mexican customs, etc."

BY LEE HEAD

Six horses, 24 to 30 inches high, all on one control, easily handled by one person! Yes, it's possible. This winter, Cedric and Lee Head spent an evening with us and Lee brought one of them along as evidence. It was then she promised an article on her experiment. You can read all about this wonderful new material (new to puppets, that is) in "Cinderella's Unbreakable Slipper," in this issue.

RAGGEDY ANN

Raggedy Ann is coming to town. The old-time favorite of children since 1917 will be the heroine of a series of puppet programs from WKNO-TV, Memphis, Tennessee.

There is hardly an English-speaking adult who does not know the lovable rag dolls created by Johnny Gruelle, or, who in turn, has not read the Raggedy Ann and Raggedy Andy books to his children or grandchildren. Leo and Dora Velleman, co-directors of children's programs at WKNO are happy to announce that the station has secured permission from the copyright-owners to use the books as the basis for more of their carefully prepared puppet presentations.

Memphis children, (and adults) are already familiar with the first live children's programs from WKNO... the "Just Before Bedtime" series where

Dora tells the tried-and true fairy tales and illustrates them either with Felt Boards, or shadow puppets, or perhaps tells the audience how they, too, can make simple puppets out of scraps, to illustrate the well-loved fairy tales that are the classics of the English language.

Now, to bring a "first" to Memphis television, the stories of Raggedy Ann and Raggedy Andy will be brought to life with carefully detailed hand puppets and miniature marionettes to capture the good-natured and cheerful atmosphere of the Gruelle books. Anyone who remembers "Raggedy Ann and the Wishing Pebble" or "Beloved Belindy" can imagine the excitement at WKNO where the puppets are being built and the props prepared. All the production skills needed to create puppet spectacles... will be called into play as the stories are being readied to go on the air.

Fignewton Frog, the hand-puppet who helps Dora tell the stories on "Just Before Bedtime" claims that he can hardly wait until Wednesday, Mar. 6, when, for the first time he will announce that "To-night is Raggedy Ann Night"... and Dora will begin to tell how the Raggedy Ann stories were written. When the introductory programs have been completed, the dolls will come to life in the nursery described with such care in the first book... "Raggedy Ann Stories" and from then on, each Wednesday will bring a new adventure in the happy lives of Raggedy Ann and Andy.

The Junior League of Memphis, who not only have made the children's programs possible by means of an annual grant-in-aid to WKNO, but whose members also assist Leo and Dora Velleman in the preparation of many of the programs, and the publication of Fignewton's Newspaper, are watching with pride this further step in the extension of live children's programming in Memphis. It is also planned that the series will be kinescoped and for-

warded to the National Educational Television Center at Ann Arbor, Mich., for redistribution to the other educational stations in the U. S.

Mr. Howard Cox, President of the Gruelle Co., has given permission to use the books, and has expressed his pleasure that the material will be treated so carefully with full attention to the spirit of the original author, who firmly believed that "Fairyland must be filled with Rag Dolls... who ride through all the wonders of Fairyland on the crook of a dimpled arm."

It is this spirit of fantasy that has enabled these wonderful children's books to survive for forty years, and WKNO is happy to make these stories available to an even greater audience of children through the medium of television and the art of puppetry.

BY OTTO KUNZE

In his interview with Herb Scheffel, Otto Kunze modestly refrained from referring to his long association with puppets. Before becoming a charter member of the P of A, Otto had participated in a Christmas play at the Royal Opera House in Dresden. At that time he was a member of the Royal Opera Orchestra. Took part in performances of the marionette theater of the Royal conductor, Adolph Hagen's, opera productions.

Otto began his puppet career in America in 1932 with a production of "Dr. Faust" presented at the Roerich Museum in N. Y.

Married shortly after to Caroline, they have had a happy and busy life with their growing puppet family. They appeared on the 1938 Festival Program with a delightful presentation of the "Brave Little Taylor," and we sincerely hope this will not be their last Festival performance.

FIRST GRADE

Bertha Wadleigh sends us this interesting picture of her first graders having fun with her "Table Puppets."

These she completed in the Workshop in "Puppetry and Creative Dramatics" at the University of New Mexico, taught by Marjorie Batchelder McPharlin and Virginia Lee Comer.

Bertha says, "Table puppets are a good type to use with primary grade children. They play in the round and it does not matter if they are seen manipulating the puppets."

Her first grade children have made their own puppets for the last four years and are looking forward to creating some of this new type.

NANCY HAZELL

Those of you who attended the 1956

Workshop at Evanston will remember Nancy Hazell's demonstration of papier mache methods. Nancy is a member of the Toronto Guild of Puppetry, but earns her living as a professional display artist, specializing in papier mache and fibre glass. The photograph shows Nancy beside the massive figure of Babe the Blue Ox that she constructed for the inner court of the Ontario Government Building at the 1954 Canadian National Exhibition in Toronto. On the opposite side of the court, facing the Ox, is a thirty foot seated figure of Paul Bunyan, built by Nancy the previous year. Big things can develop from little things!!

RESOURCES OF SOUND

(Continued from page 11)

wind, thunder, and other natural phenomena are produced artificially by special sound machines, often very complicated. The sound of thunder obtained by shaking a sheet of tin may not be an exact duplicate of nature, but it has the same emotional effect upon us and is accepted as a convention of the theatre. A puppet stage train could be more effective chugging along to the sound of beebes shot shaken in a metal box than accompanied by the actual recorded sound of a real train. For some of the ingenious methods of manufacturing sound one should read Dave Gibson's remarks under Special Effects in the Puppet Theatre Handbook, pp 184-202. A study of these effects should arouse the imagination of any puppeteer and start him exploring new possibilities of the same order. Just such a touch of aural magic may be what is needed to carry your audience into that emotional state of make-believe and illusion which can expand the scope of a little puppet stage to encompass the whole world with a reality all its own. One can be truly creative in exploring

sound for sound's sake, and develop an ear for texture and timbre. Basil Milovsoroff obtained that murky, cloudy underwater effect for Sinbad by beating upon the undampened bass strings of a dismantled upright piano with different objects of wood and metal. He tells how his children entered into this experiment with great destructive glee, but the results were convincing and haunting when the sounds were accompaniment to the enigmatic movements of his wierd denizens of deep. Try recording the sounds of tearing pieces of cloth, sawing wood, dropping objects in a pail.

An inexpensive recorder can even help in its very inadequacy by transposing a sound to a different quality than the one intended. There is also the possibility of changing speeds on the recorder. A series of taps recorded slow and speeded up will attain to the rapidity of a woodpecker's beak, a feat beyond the power of the human wrist. A crash recorded at fast speed and played back slow can be lengthened and dissipated into slowly undulating sound waves. A water whistle is usually more effective for suggesting

the sound of birds than the actual recorded bird song, and although the cries of wild animals in the zoo are obtainable on records, an artificially produced animal cry can come more closely to the personality of a puppet animal.

Children love to invent their own mechanical sounds as those made by interpretations of animal cries, and of course, they are specialists in auto-jet-plane and gun sounds. The resources of the human voice are trebled by the recorded. Monkey or squirrel jabber can be made from just any words spoken into the recorder and played back double speed. Remember how Marion Myers intrigued us with her pair of ghosts darting insanely to the gibberish of Cab Calloway played at double speed?

Artificial sound substitutes which accompany the movements of the puppet in action can be a means for highly satirical humour. For example, a slow, lumbering elephant's walk could be accompanied by the creaking of a rusty hinge, a tap on the head can give out a clear, bell tone suggesting the emptiness within. And one could be very inventive in choosing sounds to accompany the coming to life of inanimate objects such as stage furniture and stage props.

Just as puppets can learn to interpret music in pantomime, so music can be adapted to bring out the intensity of certain movements the puppets need to make and thereby heighten the dramatic effect. In my current play the cat picks up a heap of gold coins from a table and tosses them over the front of the stage. The glistening coins are strung in such a way as to make a gleaming streak in suspension from the table to the floor. This movement is accompanied by swift, staccato cadenzas on the marimba. The children jump involuntarily with delight at this sudden splash of color heightened by an accompanying splash of sound.

Another effective use of incongru-

ous sound is to make an artificial looking creature, or object apparently produce distinctly natural sounds such as having Punch's baby, a non-descript bundle of rags, emit the real recorded cries of a baby, or a crude automobile equipped with the actual sounds of a de luxe car. On the Cook Laboratories' sound sampler "The Compleat InFidelity" one can get everything from roaring winds and cawing crows in the mountain forests to exploding fire-crackers, baby's cries, telephone bell, trains, one-cylinder engines, and cackling hens reproduced with a fidelity one cannot hope to attain with limited equipment at home. By means of the recorder one can also tamper with recordings mingling the sounds of nature with recordings of music. If your recorder does not permit the mixing of two channels you can get an inexpensive mike mixer which will permit the simultaneous use of several sound sources. For my Mexican fiesta scene, I had friends shout the "Ole's" for the bull fight sequence which were dubbed in to the music very convincingly. With the use of two recorders one can reproduce his own voice ad infinitum to become a shouting, argumentative crowd, or with some vocal ingenuity can accomplish the task (of questionable value) of being a trio of Elvis Presleys singing the "Hound Dog" classic. For the one man show, recorded sound effects replace sound props which are awkward to carry and require free hands to operate. By means of a foot control attached to the recorder, one can operate the sound effects with split second accuracy.

One word of caution. In one's enthusiasm it is very easy to overdo the sound by assailing the ear with volumes which fail to convince because of their over-insistence, or by prolonging the effect until it loses its punch by being overdone. I find it continually necessary to prune out devices produced with difficulty and loving care. Continual performances

of the show finally convince me that too much is too much even of a good thing. Even though these stretches of tape are regretfully snipped out, once gone, they are not missed. One learns that the devices, too be effective, must be varied, brief, simple. In making the sounds for a scene in a haunted house I tried all kinds of elaborate spooky effects on the organ and piano only to end up finally by using a series of startling, insistent tapings on different objects. The startling effect of the sounds was emphasized by their brevity, and the sudden, chopped off silence which followed each tattoo set in relief the punch-line response which

helped explode the spookiness into humour, releasing the tenseness of the children to their own delight. Remember, perhaps the main advantage of the tape recorder is, after all, its flexibility which permits of constant editing of the tape to suit the needs of your audiences and to satisfy your changing conception of the show.

For the puppet production should continue to grow as you perform it, modified by experience of success and failure to approach finally more closely to that goal towards which we all strive—the ideal expression of one's individuality.

Cinderella's Unbreakable Slipper

Leonora D. Head

Exasperated by the untimely demise of our everpopular puppet prima-ballerina, Mitzie, we openly expressed our disgust to an architect-designer friend, Alfred H. Robson. It seemed to us that the plastic wood used for most of Mitzie's body had simply dried out and crumbled with apparently little pressure. "If there was only some medium for puppet construction that was unbreakable and washable, yet more workable than Celastic." This was our verbal wish. Dirt and dust of the road was as big problem with Mitzie as breakage since she was dressed in pure white.

"Try Fiberglas," suggested our friend. "With Fiberglas, your big puppets would be extremely light and durable as well as washable."

Mr. Robson had been repairing a houseboat for his family's vacation up the rivers of Florida. He had become acquainted with Fiberglas during this restoration. Since he had once made fine puppets himself, he quickly recognized the possibilities of this new substance for use in puppetry.

Taking Mr. Robson's suggestion, we started our experiments. Now, with the completion of these, we are able to report to all professional and advanced puppeteers. We specify experienced puppeteers simply because Fiberglas demands a thorough knowledge of papier-mache, plastic wood, and Celastic methods as they apply to puppet making. One must also have a well ventilated studio with adequate equipment including a face mask to use when mixing powdered glass.

The initial expense for Fiberglas materials is high, but the puppet-maker will find that a little of it goes a long way. His finished product is so durable that in the long run, his puppet cost is cheaper than by other methods. We find that by using washable, color-fast costumes, our yearly refurbishing job is reduce to a mere soap and water bath: strings, costume and all.

Whether woven Fiberglass cloth or powdered glass is used for the basic material, the puppet-maker will also need:

1. Resin.

2. Slow Catalyst (No. 1 Hardener)

3. Fast Catalyst (No. 2 Hardener)

Most commercial resins come already mixed with the slow catalyst. The fast catalyst is dangerous in its undiluted state unless one is properly educated as to its inflammable qualities. It must be kept cool, away from heat and direct sunlight. If the fast catalyst should spill on your skin and clothes, wash off immediately with soap and plenty of water. This will prevent a skin burn or the possibility of your clothes bursting into flame under strong sunlight or intense heat.

A negative or positive mold can be used. Fiberglas will cast anything from solid objects to paper-thin shells accurately and with minute detail. The room temperature must be at least 60 degrees Fahrenheit in order to "cook" the resin and catalyst mixture. The warmer the room, the faster the Fiberglas sets. Once the resin and catalysts are combined in correct proportion, the puppet-maker has up to 45 minutes to work with the prepared resin and glass. This is usually sufficient time to cast one puppet.

Fiberglas cuts our production time in half. Casts come out of their molds "smooth as glass." With special resin colors, the castings can have a basic "skin" color permeated through them.

This means that the casting is always "painted no matter how deeply it is

drilled, sanded or sawed. Yes, the finished product can be worked up the same way as wood; except it is so tough that power tools are required. Sanding is unnecessary unless a positive mold casting is allowed to drip.

Our experiments have only just begun to produce the potentials of Fiberglas. It can be lighter than papier-mâché, stronger than Celastic, as workable as plastic wood, as washable as nylon, as smooth as glass and as resourceful as imagination all at once.

We have been able to produce huge horses weighing only one-sixth the weight of a regular puppet horse. Thus, with only two pairs of hand, we can easily fill our stage with teams of rearing, prancing glass horses, and still have one hand free to operate a turntable and curtain.

As a by-product of our three-dimensional marionette construction, we discovered that Fiberglas would produce a parchment-like fabric with which we are creating unusual shadows in color. Clear and molded, this same fabric creates the perfect slipper for Cinderella's tiny puppet foot: perfect as the finest glass yet resilient enough to stand a tumble down anyone's steps.

For further information, watch the PUPPETRY JOURNAL for the announcement of a booklet on Fiberglas puppet construction.

New Membership Honor Roll

696 Members as of March 1, 1957

Why are we at a standstill with 696 members? Your guess is as good as mine, but can't we do something about it before Fest. A new member from YOU will do the job!

Bill Buxton—1, Gertrude Melchior—1, Doris G. Jones—1, Mrs. E. E. Fox—1, Frank Foy Jr.—1, Edith Serrell—1, John Shirley—1, Rod Young—1, Ro-

main Proctor—1, Frances Meharg—1, Charlotte Wilcox—1, James Gamble—1, Bob Braun—1, Vivian Michael—1, Fern Zwickey—1, Herb Scheffel—1, Lettie Connell—1, Mr. Seidman of Gallery of Arts, Kansas City, Mo.—1,

Milton Halpert—2, George Merten—2, John Zweers—2, Rena Prim—2, Detroit Institute of Art—2.

Festival in California

Although your Festival Chairman, Melvyn Helstein, Department of Theater Arts, UCLA has been revolving in a dizzy whirl with a gigantic musical production which he has been directing, plans for the 1957 Fest have been rapidly progressing. Although we have a temporary program, minus some names, etc. at hand, we will only try to give you an over-all picture of what is in store for us.

First, John Zweers, Pasadena, is acting with Mel as co-chairman to round up the last minute details.

For those who can arrive on Saturday before Festival, there will be the final performance of the U.C.L.A. Summer Theater Workshop at 8:30 P. M. which promises to be an outstanding performance.

Sunday preceeding Fest will be devoted to tours of that interesting city, Los Angeles. You know how involved we get after Festival begins, so this will be a rare opportunity.

Registration proper begins Monday, August 5 at 9:00 A. M. followed by a tour of the exhibit at 10:00. From 3:00 to 5:00 a reception at the Chancellor's residence and the opening session of the Fest with President George Merten presiding. An outstanding speaker will be secured for this session. In the evening, a performance for adult audience.

Tuesday, the emphasis in lectures and plays will be on Creative Puppetry, or the development of a play from an idea... as applied to children and their leader, commercial producers, amateurs, etc. Leaders in each field will handle this section of the

program.

Wednesday will feature Evaluation, with emphasis on self evaluation of your own play. This will be followed by a dozen or more discussion groups... each on a different use of puppetry. You will find your interests here, whether it is Puppetry in the Home or Puppetry in Films. Every field will be explored.

Thursday, The Place of Puppetry in Perspective of Theatrical History will be surveyed, and the Place of Puppetry in Theater Arts of Today will be discussed and defined.

Shows? Plenty of them, every afternoon and evening, with some separation of those for adults and children. The best talent on the coast will be secured for these shows, giving you an opportunity to see performances new to Festival audiences. Cabarets and Pot Pourris as usual with an authentic western barbecue will be featured.

Mrs. Allen, of the Los Angeles Junior program tells us their will be adequate care for the small fry, with creative dramatics and other recreational facilities available for your youngsters, right on the campus.

Olga Stevens, with a new address, 15 W. 84th St., Apt. 5A, New York City, writes us that she has advised various railroads to send information direct (Directories have been provided to several), but has had little response about group travel. If you are interested in securing information from her, don't expect her to give you adequate service at the last minute. Get busy and write her!

What Are You Creating for Festival?

Festival Workshop

George Latshaw

Many puppeteers, beginners and old-timers alike, have remarked on the enthusiasm and stimulation generated by the Festivals and Workshops. "I can't wait to get home to try out such-and-such an idea," they'll say. This year at UCLA, they won't have to wait. Members of the '57 Workshop will get into action on the spot. Participation will be the keynote—you will find out what YOU can do before you go home—working with the guidance and encouragement of the most capable leaders we can round up. You will find individual attention given your projects and problems, because the Workshop will be presented to small groups (where everyone can see, hear, sit down, and DO). The groups will have sessions with a variety of leaders during the two days, and they'll

have the stimulation of seeing ideas from other members of the group spring to life. In answer to many, many requests this workshop is being designed more personally for you... and it promises to be exciting and productive.

More people have helped to shape the plans for this year's Workshop than we'd have room to list, but a special thanks should go to the following puppeteers for their part of the planning: Meredith Bixby, Members of the Detroit Puppet Guild, Spence and Alan Gilmore, Mel Helstien, Ed Johnson, Helen Joseph, George Merten, Vivian Michael, Basil Milovsoroff, Lewis Parsons, Ellen and Romain Proctor, Martin and Olga Stevens, Anne Thurman, Vernone Tracey, Alfred Wallace and Fern Zwickey.



Rod Young—Punch's Mailbox, Box 14, University of Richmond, Virginia

Convulsed with laughter, Punch met Judy's broad grin with his usual smile of triumph. The ragged old pile of musty news items had been replaced by a brand new conglomerate of sprightly puppet reports collected from letters, cards, magazines and newspapers from all over the country. So, cocking his cocks-comb cap askew, Mr. Punch read aloud his account in his own redundant and reedy fashion.

Dorothy Gleason, member of the

Woman's Art Club of Cincinnati, was presented in a puppet demonstration program on January 31 at the Cincinnati Woman's Club. The CINCINNATI ENQUIRER pictured Dottie and her puppets along with a story. Harry Walbruck toured through Tennessee and Kentucky during the fall months, and there's no telling where Harry is now. The Jimmerri Marionettes, Jim Menke and Addis Williams, are hitting Georgie and Florida in their tour of the southeastern states.

Jim and Addis made a weekend trip to Western College, Ohio during February, where they joined drama major Kathy Piper for a marionette variety jam session during intermission at a college dance, to the delight of all collegians and faculty members including Bill and Ruth Duncan, the Tatterman Marionettes.

York, Nebraska's well known puppeteers, Wilma and Mildred Karre, enjoyed a full page feature page with story and pictures in the Omaha WORLD HERALD magazine section on January 13. The story attested their indebtedness to Festival attendance, which just goes to show how much you'll gain by attendance at U.C. L.A. this August. We are all indebted to Festivals, past, present and future.

Fern Zwickey always sends us a copy of the Detroit Puppeteers Guild NEWSLETTER and we get the scoop on views and news from their fair city.

Art Education majors at Wayne University are busy every week with shows which Fern books from telephone requests. They gave twenty shows in December plus fifteen at their annual art show. Wow! The Festival workshop was discussed recently when George Merten and George Latshaw were hosted by Detroiters in February. The latter George displayed his particular genius with puppets for the Art Institute's monthly program. Clarissa Yager was interviewed on television on January tenth. Detroiters Charles and Laverne Finger are currently deep in serious art study in London and write enthusiastically of their contacts with British Puppet and Model Theatre Guild members. Vernone Tracey reports that her classes for both children and adults are going great guns at her Puppet Carriage House. At a recent meeting of Detroiters member Eve Sheldon presented an audience participation program which included making edible puppets. A clever thought for an economical host or hostess!

George Latshaw, sent word that the Brooks Theatre at the Cleveland Playhouse was alive with puppets the weekend of February ninth with four performances of "The Hiccoughing Princess" by Herb Kanzell and Sally Green, adapted for rod puppets and human actors by Marianne MacGuffin. Junior League puppeteers had such sport with the huge, three and a half foot Sicilian-type rod puppets made for the deFalla opera by George, they've used them in two additional productions with new costumes, hairdos and some revamped faces by Joan Nordstrom and direction by Betsy deWindt and Patty Farrington.

Paul and Mary Ritts are seen as a new weekly feature on the "Big Top" circus show over CBS national stations. If you watch George Burns and Gracie Allen you may have seen the dog and cat puppets offered the public by their commercial sponsors, Carnation Milk. Viewers of the Ed Sullivan show enjoyed "a brief, but good accounting" by Rene's Puppets one Sunday evening in early February. Senor Wences was signed for the Danny Kaye show at the Colonial, Boston, March eleventh. Shari Lewis was on a swing of the Stanley Warner theatre chain houses in northern New Jersey for special children's matinees. On Lincoln's Birthday she played in Jersey City and was due for stands in Hackensack, Ridgewood and elsewhere.

According to Variety, on February eighth at the Savoy Hotel, London, "Rene Strange is probably Britain's most attractive puppeteer and her costume shows off her figure to best advantage. She has devised a pleasing routine, neatly trimmed for the occasion, in which she provides her own vocal accompaniment for her dancing dolls."

A full half page in VARIETY on February 13 pictured Ollie lovingly biting Kukla's nose as he has been doing for ten wonderful years on television. In an interesting article within

the same issue covering the career of the captivating Kuklapolitans it was reported that "asked about Burr Tillstrom, also associated with the program, Ollie says 'I ignore him. You have to ignore some one who has been standing back of you all these years. He's what you call anonymous. Everyone, of course, knows me when I walk down the street.' Ollie might have added that without Tillstrom's guiding genius backstage, television would have been deprived of one of its most unique and acclaimed assortment of personalities." Unquote and an additional Hooray!

The Junior League of Richmond, Virginia, presented a week long run of "The Magic Sneeze" at Miller and Rhoads Store during January. Good coverage was given in the press. Pictured in the paper were children, puppets and hard working Jr. League puppeteers Mrs. R. Stuart Cottrell Jr., Miss Cleland Donnan and Mrs. George Semler. Currently on the road with weekly showing is the marionette version of "The Golden Cockerel." Getting ready for production next year is an old Jr. League friend, "Nester and the Alligator."

On their way to shows in Florida, Cedric and Lee Head stopped off in Richmond in January for visits with Caroline Lutz and Rod Young. Their successful Christmas season in Omaha gave them a chance to visit with Marjorie Shanafelt and others. We hope that in Florida they were able to visit the new Jero-Yano Art Gallery, 440 Espanola Way, Miami Beach 39. Jero Magon, officially retired from his teaching in New York, has opened a beautiful gallery with Ben Yano and classes are filled to capacity. Jero's book on puppet stagecraft, almost finished and in the hands of the printer, will be a must for every puppeteer.

Eva LeGallienne's one-woman show "An Evening With Oscar Wilde" includes the story "The Birthday of the Infanta" and her voice becomes vib-

antly alive for the passage describing the puppet show. A refreshing lesson in theatre to see this gifted actress in a solo performance. Perhaps this item will prompt you to read this lovely story yourself to see what Wilde had to say about puppets.

Council member Bill Jacoby and the Mrs. began classes in puppetry in Evansville, Indiana, in conjunction with the YWCA, in February. This was preceded with considerable publicity, lecture work and TV shows in the area. Another member of your Council may have set a record of sorts because he and Ellen Proctor have now performed in Vandervoort's Music Hall 2434 times over Christmas seasons past and have signed contracts for shows there next season and we hope for many years to come. Hats off to Romain Proctor!

Those who have seen Martin Stevens' "Toymaker" show or film will want a copy of the little paper-back book available now at just twenty-five cents. Those who haven't seen the show, and what a darn shame, might catch Steve doing it "live" around New York City or may rent or buy the film produced by Puppet Films, American Visuals Corporation, 460 Fourth Avenue, New York 16, N. Y. That's where you send your quarter for the booklet too, and it's more than worth it.

Rufus Rose continues on the Saturday "Howdy Doody" television show and reports tell us that Jimmy is married and teaching drama at the University of Chicago while Bunny, whom many remember as a "Huck Finn" is one of those mighty jet pilots! Christopher is undoubtedly still Christopher. The "Perry Como Puppeteers" were in reality Perry, Ernie Kovaks and Tony Bennett while a special effect created by the television cameras tied strings to the Andrew Sisters song team who danced and sang in a seemingly marionette theatre. All this on the Como Show February 23, and a clever effect it was!

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We received clippings and programs from past shows presented by the Padre Puppeteers, who in reality are Mrs. Hitchcock and Mrs. Genevieve Engman. They have caused quite a stir in their area with delightful performances. Certainly they will be on hand for the Festival in August, so everyone come meet them and perhaps you too can see a copy of SAN DIEGO AND POINT MAGAZINE for December, 1956, which told in story and pictures about these imaginative puppeteers.

Della Bird continues happily teaching her puppet class and was happier than ever to see Roy Etherington and Phil Molby who are touring with the Coleman's "Snow White." Pictures of the Grover Leshers appeared in the November CLINCO NEWS telling of

their trip to Northwestern and their puppet activity. VARIETY reported pre-Christmas that Governor TV Attractions has a new children's puppet series on the market titled "The Dameron Reynard Theatre of Fairy Tales," and the show consists of three minute cliff-hangers narrated by a fox character.

Our only compensation for this column is to make Mr. Punch happy by receiving word from you about your personal accomplishments in the puppet field. Our mailbox thrives and shines when you are prompted to drop Punch and his beautiful Judy a card or letter. Please let us hear from you. It's as simple as addressing:

Rod Young
Box 14
University of Richmond, Va.

PUPPETEERS OF AMERICA REPORT OF ANNUAL AUDIT

For Year July 1, 1955 to June 30, 1956

Rena Prim, Executive Secretary

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS

From July 1, 1955 through June 30, 1956

Balance Cash in Bank June 30, 1955 as per Audit	156.13
RECEIPTS:	
Membership Dues	\$ 3,193.62
Festival Income	545.09
Festival Advance — Refunded (1955)	500.00
Advertising and Publication Income	159.50
Sale of Seals	70.50
Sale of British Year Books	34.60
TOTAL	\$ 4,503.31
	\$ 4,659.44

DISBURSEMENTS:	
Bank Exchange (July 1956)22
Puppetry Journal Expenses	2,104.58
Stenographic Services	182.40
Telephone	1.51
Membership Folders	41.20
Office Supplies, Printing and Mailing	138.64
Auditing and Reports	25.00
Advances on Festival Expenses — 1957 (To Be Refunded)	500.00
Postage	15.00
Festival Expenses 1956	1,000.00
For Advance Christmas Cards (1956)	160.00
Premium on Fidelity Bond, Treasurer	22.50
Cost British Year Books	29.98
June 30, 1956 Balance Cash in Bank as Per Books	\$ 4,221.61
RECONCILIATION:	\$ 438.43
Balance as Per Bank Statement	1,556.05
Plus Deposits in July 1956 Included in Above Receipts	
7-2-56—238.10 7-9-56—98.00	336.10
	1,892.15
Less: Outstanding Checks No. 194 through No. 200	1,453.50
	438.65
Less: Bank Exchange Dated 7-9-5622
	\$ 438.43

REPORT OF 1956 FESTIVAL INCOME AND EXPENSES

Total Direct Festival Income	\$ 6,017.98
Total Direct Festival Expenses	3,896.65
Total Direct Festival Profit	\$ 2,121.33
Festival Net Profit	\$ 2,121.33
Workshop Net Profit	989.87
Mart Net Profit	388.80
Grand Total Profit	\$ 3,500.00

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List of Puppet Plays — by Alfred Wallace 35 cents

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